

VII. SPECIES ENTERED IN THE CHECK-LIST AS ACCIDENTAL, BUT NOW CONSIDERED AS OF REGULAR OCCURRENCE.

[344.] **Buteo brachyurus** VIEILL.—Brackets to be removed, the bird being now known to be a resident species in Florida.

[623.] **Vireo altiloquus barbatulus** (CAB.).—Brackets to be removed, the species being now known as a regular visitor to the Florida Keys, where it breeds.

[737.] **Parus meridionalis** SCL. — Brackets to be removed, its breeding range being now known to include portions of southern Arizona.

RECENT LITERATURE.

Sharpe's Catalogue of the Sturniformes.*—The present volume completes the descriptions of the Acromyodian Passeres. It treats of the Wood-Swallows (Artamidae), the Starlings (Sturnidae), the Weaver-birds (Ploceidae), and the Larks (Alaudidae), and also the Brush-birds (Atrichidae), and Lyre-birds (Menuridae). These are all Old World groups, the Larks only being represented in the New World by the single genus *Otocoris*. The number of species and subspecies treated is 601, represented by 11,699 specimens, only 58 species, or about ten per cent. of the whole, being unrepresented in the British Museum collection.

Respecting the classification, which brings these families into such unusual juxtaposition, Mr. Sharpe observes: "The classification adopted in the third volume of the present work for the arrangement of the Passeriformes was principally that of Mr. Wallace (Ibis, 1874, p. 409), with certain modifications. During the sixteen years which have elapsed since Mr. Wallace propounded his idea of an arrangement of the Passeres, we have learned that the classification adopted in 1877 is somewhat arti-

*Catalogue of the | Passeriformes, | or | Perching Birds, | in the | Collection | of the | British Museum. | — | Sturniformes, | containing the Families | Artamidae, | Sturnidae, | Ploceidae, | Alaudidae. | Also the families | Atrichidae and Menuridae. | By | R. Bowdler Sharpe. | London: | Printed by order of the Trustees. | Sold by | Longmans & Co., 39 Paternoster Row; | B. Quaritch, 15 Piccadilly; | Asher & Co., 13 Bedford Street, Covent Garden; | Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 57 Ludgate Hill; | and at the | British Museum (Natural History), Cromwell Road, S. W. | 1890.—8vo, pp xvi+702, pl. xv. = Catalogue of the Birds in the British Museum, Vol. XIII.

ficial; the characters which were then thought to be of great importance now seem of little worth. Of the three Sections which I have adopted from Mr. Wallace, the one treated of in the present volume seems to be the most unnatural. The Starlings are divorced from the Corvidæ, to which they are undoubtedly allied; the Artamidæ may be a Sturnine family, but of that I am not yet assured; the Alaudidæ find themselves separated from the Motacillidæ, and the Ploceidæ from the Fringillidæ and Icteridæ."

The volume is of course an invaluable hand-book of the groups treated. The method of treatment is similar to that of the other volumes of the series by the same author. 'Subspecies' and 'races' are freely recognized, but in a way to avoid 'trinomials' with, in some cases, the singular result of a form described, say in 1800, being ranked as a subspecies of another form described half a century or more later—an anachronism in nomenclature not by any means new in this series of volumes.

In treating the genus *Otocoris* (or '*Otocorys*,' as Mr. Sharpe naturally prefers to write it) he says of the American forms: "Anything more puzzling than these races of Horned Larks it has never been my lot to describe. The differences between *O. alpestris* and *O. rubea* are as well marked as could be wished, but between these two extreme forms are interposed a number of races which seem absolutely to connect them [!], and both of these American authors [Messrs. Henshaw and Ridgway] admit that these connecting links actually exist [!]. To write all of the races under the heading *O. alpestris* would be to obscure the existence of several highly interesting geographical forms, and I have therefore thought it best to recognize the races determined by Mr. Henshaw and confirmed by Mr. Ridgway, with certain notes of my own upon the series now lying before me." (These include the specimens in the Henshaw collection.) Mr. Dwight's paper on the same group was published too late for consideration in the body of the volume, but it is mentioned in the 'Addenda,' and the three additional races proposed by Mr. Dwight after an examination of more than six times the material (2012 specimens) studied by Mr. Henshaw, are accepted, but not "*more Americano*," under trinomials, but of course after the stereotyped method of Mr. Sharpe.

After stating that he quite agrees with Mr. Henshaw "that the large Horned Lark of Europe cannot be separated from that of North America," his study of the British Museum series of American Horned Larks appears to have led him to separate the American forms into two specific groups, as follows: 1. *O. leucolema*, with 'subsp.' α . *pratensis*, and β . *arvicola*; 2. *O. alpestris*, with 'subsp.' α . *chrysolema*, β . *peregrina* (U. S. Colombia), γ . *rubea*, δ . *giraudi*, ϵ . *strigata*. On just what grounds this division is made Mr. Sharpe fails to state; to American eyes they are certainly inscrutable: for a more arbitrary arrangement would be hard to devise. Geographically his subspecies of *alpestris* are separated from *alpestris* proper by the intervention of his whole *leucolema* group, his first subspecies of *alpestris* (*alpestris* is limited in the breeding season to Labrador and the Hudson Bay region) being *chrysolema*.

of Southern California and Mexico. On either geographical or other grounds the case is scarcely better for the other subspecies of his *alpestris* group.

In the present volume, as in previous volumes of this series, Mr. Sharpe displays his usual independence of the strict law of priority, the case of *Ploceus baya* (p. 488) being an illustration in point, where an Indian Weaver-bird was named by Linnæus *Loxia philippina* and the species known for a long period as *Ploceus philippinus*. Later (1844) it was called *Ploceus baya* by Blyth, this latter name being also in common use for a long period for an allied species, to which of late it has been restricted. But as no Weaver-bird has ever come from the Philippines, the name *philippinus* is discarded for *baya*, and an older name than *baya* is properly revived for the species commonly known as *baya*.

In the course of the volume no less than 31 new names are proposed for species and subspecies (all of course, *more Brittanico*, binomial in form), and 11 new generic names are introduced, the latter being as follows: 1. *Spodiopsar* = *Poliofsar* Sharpe, preoccupied; 2, *Chalcopsar* = *Megalopterus* Smith, preoccupied; 3, *Hagiopsar*, type *Amydrus tristrami* Scl.; 4, *Heteropsar*, type *Lamprocolinus acuticaudus* Boc.; 5, *Penthetriopsis*, type *Loxia macroura* Gm.; 6, *Stictospiza*, type *Fringilla formosa* Lath.; 7, *Granatina*, type *Fringilla granatina* Linn.; 8, *Heterhyphantes*, type *Malimbus nigricollis* Vieill.; 9, *Nesacanthis*, type *Foudia eminentissima* Bon.; 10, *Chersophilus*, type *Alauda duponti* Vieill.; 11, *Heliocorys*, type *Galerita modesta* Heugl.—J. A. A.

Hargitt's Catalogue of the Woodpeckers.*—The well circumscribed family of the Woodpeckers comprises, according to Mr. Hargitt, 50 genera and 385 species and subspecies, represented in the British Museum by 7894 specimens. "As a rule," says Mr. Hargitt, "the species of the Picidæ are very clearly defined, but in *Dendrocopus* [= *Dryobates*], *Picoides*, and *Colaptes* there is a decided tendency to subdivide into races." Only in the case of the North American *Colaptes* does "there seem to be any definite appearance of hybridization." This leads him to the consideration of the question of what constitutes a species, and he accepts as the test non-intergradation with allied forms; "where intergradation takes place the allied form is a subspecies or race." On the question of insular forms he says, "Island forms may or may not possess some slight differences from typical birds, but not sufficient to separate them; yet some authors take it for granted that with insular separation there can be no intergradation: therefore we find insignificant islands made to father a host of indifferent species or subspecies; but I fail to see

* Catalogue | of the | Picariæ | in the | Collection | of the | British Museum. | — | Scansores, | containing the Family | Picidæ. | By | Edward Hargitt. | London: | Printed by order of the Trustees. | Sold by | Longmans & Co., 39 Paternoster Row; | [etc.] | 1890. 8vo. pp. xvi+598, pl. xv. = Catalogue of the Birds in the British Museum, Vol. XVIII.